



At-A-Glance: Virtual Schools

October 2017

In 2011, the Tennessee General Assembly passed the Virtual Public Schools Act. The act describes virtual schools as public schools that use technology to deliver a significant portion of instruction to students via the internet in a virtual or remote setting.



Under the law, virtual schools must comply with the same laws as traditional public schools on curriculum standards, class size, length of the school year, regular student assessments, and teacher qualifications. School districts may manage their own virtual schools or may contract for services with nonprofit and for-profit entities.

Virtual schools in Tennessee are funded the same way as traditional public schools. School districts can use Basic Education Program (BEP) funds from both local and state sources to implement and operate their virtual education programs. Districts are also encouraged to apply for grants and accept donations to help fund their virtual education programs.



Since 2011, nine school districts have established virtual schools: Bradley County, Bristol City, Hamilton County, Metro Nashville, Robertson County, Shelby County, Union County, Washington County, and Wilson County.

Virtual schools are included in the annual State Report Card published by the Tennessee Department of Education.